

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 TOKYO 13206 210736Z
ACTION OES-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 EPA-04 CEQ-01 /027 W
-----005217 220212Z /70

R 210732Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9790

UNCLAS TOKYO 13206

FOR OES/ENP/EN

DEPT PASS TO EPA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV, JA
SUBJECT: RELAXATION OF NOX STANDARD

REF: TOKYO 4885

1. ON JULY 10 THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY ANNOUNCED A REVISED STANDARD FOR LEVEL OF NITROGEN DIOXIDE IN THE ATMOSPHERE. UNDER THE NEW STANDARD, WHICH WENT INTO EFFECT ON JULY 11, THE AVERAGE TOLERANCE OF NITROGEN DIOXIDE CONCENTRATION IN THE AIR IS EASED FROM THE OLD 0.02 PPM ON A DAILY AVERAGE OF HOURLY VALUES TO BETWEEN 0.04 PPM AND 0.06 PPM ON A DAILY AVERAGE. THE NEW DAILY AVERAGE IS CALCULATED ON THE BASIS OF THE 0.02-0.03 PPM YEARLY AVERAGE RECOMMENDED IN MARCH BY A PANEL OF EXPERTS (REFTEL).

2. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FIRST RELAXATION OF AN AIR POLLUTION STANDARD SINCE THE BASIC LAW FOR ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL WAS PASSED IN 1967 HAS MET WITH CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION FROM ENVIRONMENTALISTS, OPPOSITION DIET MEMBERS, AND VARIOUS MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS.
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GOVERNOR MINOBE OF TOKYO ANNOUNCED ON JULY 14 THAT TOKYO WOULD ENFORCE THE OLD 0.02 PPM STANDARD. KAWASAKI CITY, YOKOHAMA, AND SAITAMA PREFECTURE ARE TAKING THE SAME STAND AND WILL ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF 0.02 PPM IN THE CASE OF FIXED SOURCES OF POLLUTION. OPPOSITION TO RELAXATION MAKES VARIOUS CLAIMS INCLUDING: (A) RELAXATION WILL LEAD TO LAX ENFORCEMENT OF OTHER

STANDARDS; (B) THAT A STIFF STANDARD IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THOSE, SUCH AS ASTHMA SUFFERERS, WHO ARE EASILY AFFECTED BY AIR POLLUTION; (C) THAT THE OLD STANDARD SHOULD BE OBSERVED IN ORDER TO END PHOTOCHEMICAL SMOG; AND (D) THAT BUSINESS AND MITI MAINTAINED CLOSE CONTACT IN PRESSURING EA TO RELAX THE STANDARD.

3. NITROGEN DIOXIDE CONCENTRATIONS ARE MONITORED AT 798 STATIONS THROUGHOUT JAPAN. NOX CONCENTRATION IS LESS THAN 0.04 PPM AT 62.8 PER CENT OF THESE STATIONS, BETWEEN 0.04 PPM AND 0.06 PPM AT 25.5 PER CENT AND ABOVE 0.06 PPM AT 6.3 PER CENT. THIS ATTAINMENT OF THE STANDARD AT 93.7 PER CENT OF MONITORING STATIONS CONTRASTS WITH ATTAINMENT AT 16.5 PER CENT UNDER THE OLD STANDARD.
MANSFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

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TAGS: SENV, JA
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